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**MARCH 10, 2004
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STENDRINI PLEADS GUILTY TO MISUSE
OF BALTIMORE POLICE ACCOUNT**

Baltimore, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today that John Stendrini, age 60, Chief of Staff to former Baltimore Police Commissioner Edward T. Norris, pled guilty to his participation in a scheme to use funds from a Baltimore Police Department account (the "Supplemental Account") to pay for expensive meals, trips, gifts and other personal items.

In a statement of facts provided to the court as part of the plea agreement, Stendrini admitted that although he knew that the funds in the Supplemental Account had to be used for the benefit of the Department, between May 2000 and August 2002 Norris and Stendrini devised and carried out a scheme to use the Supplemental Account to finance several thousands of dollars worth of personal expenditures. Stendrini used the fund to pay for an expensive vacation to a resort in Ontario, Canada and various bar tabs.

Stendrini acknowledged that he and Norris prepared and submitted letters to the Baltimore Police Department Fiscal Section authorizing the disbursement of funds from the Supplemental Account that were crafted to give the false impression that the funds were to be used or had been

used for legitimate business expenditures. For instance, these disbursement letters routinely, falsely characterized expenditures for personal trips, meals, gifts, or other personal items as expenses related to police department business. In addition, once city officials began raising questions about the Supplemental Account, Stendrini admitted that he attempted to cover up these illegal activities by lying to city officials about the handling of the account.

Stendrini faces a maximum penalty for the conspiracy charge of 5 years in prison, although under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines Stendrini is expected to receive a sentence of up to 6 months. Stendrini also faces 3 years of supervised release, a fine, and restitution. Stendrini is on pretrial release pending his sentencing which is scheduled for June 21, 2004.

The criminal charges in this indictment are the result of a joint investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation and the United States Attorney's Office. This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Steven H. Levin and Jason M. Weinstein.